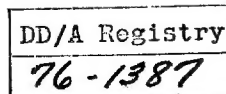


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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

FROM : Alfonso Rodriguez  
Director of Training

SUBJECT : Employee Concerns About Fitness Report Evaluations

REFERENCE : Memo dtd 23 Feb 76 to DCI fm MAG; same subject

1. There is no question that Fitness Reports are and have been a source of frustration and concern for rater and ratee alike. Last January I issued a notice for all OTR employees emphasizing the importance of careful Fitness Report preparation and instructing rating officers to pay particular attention to the descriptions of each letter rating and to apply these ratings accordingly. My particular emphasis was to define "Proficient" as an acceptable level of performance fully qualifying the recipient for favorable consideration for promotion and other career development actions. A common agreement on the meaning of "Proficient" performance would help counter the trend toward "Strong" performance ratings becoming the Agency performance standard.

2. As you may know, fitness reporting is covered specifically and for at least a full day in three management training courses. The subject is covered tangentially in a fourth course (MBO Seminar) through discussion of the LOI. A new three-day course, Supervisory Skills, will devote the better part of one day to LOIs and Fitness Reports. Beginning in July, the fitness reporting topic will be presented to approximately 900 employees each year. Over the past years about 2000 employees have attended these courses. I believe the Fitness Report material has reached a somewhat larger fraction of the supervisory pool than the MAG memorandum suggests. The impact of this training is difficult to assess. In the final analysis the preparation of a Fitness Report depends on a number of personal characteristics and attitudes as well as supervisor/employee relationships which are not readily dealt with in short training courses. For these reasons I conclude that the real problem is in the working environment.

3. I am in sympathy with the concerns expressed by MAG, but I do not believe a Fitness Report task force will contribute to the resolution of their concerns. As an alternative, I suggest

that each Deputy Director state (or restate) the Fitness Report policies for his Directorate, and that these policies be reviewed by the Management Committee and the DCI. Out of this process an Agency policy could be adopted stressing the common features of fitness reporting in the four Directorates and explicitly defining and supporting important Directorate differences which materially affect the preparation of Fitness Reports. I also suggest that the MAG be asked to reexamine the Fitness Report process a year to 18 months after adopting the policy statement. If at that time the problems are still so apparent, a task force may well offer the best opportunity for upgrading the fitness reporting process.

  
Alfonso Rodriguez /

STATINTL

Att

23 February 1976

20/11/1976

76/0421

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence


SUBJECT : Employee Concerns About Fitness Report  
Evaluations

1. For some time, the Management Advisory Group has been considering ways in which the current Fitness Report system could be improved. Although the DDO MAG initially called this subject to our attention, concern about Fitness Reports appears to be widespread among employees in every Directorate.

2. As we perceive them, employee concerns lie not so much in the design of the rating system itself, but in the variety of ways supervisors interpret and apply the evaluation standards. These concerns are borne out by statistical evidence that shows what we believe to be unrealistic differences in the distributions of ratings among the four Directorates, unrealistic differences within components of the same Directorate, and other deviations that seriously degrade the utility of the letter grades. The deficiencies have long been recognized, and the ranking panel system that now exists in every Directorate was in part established to counterbalance the inequities, but its degree of success is unclear.

3. Better supervisor training could serve, some believe, as a vehicle for improving rating objectivity. The one course devoted exclusively to the subject is a two-day "Performance Evaluation Workshop" offered by OTR on request. Fitness reporting and Letters of Instruction are also addressed for one day during the five-day "Fundamentals of Supervision and Management" offered ten times during 1975. Clearly, the present course offerings provide information only to a fraction of the pool of supervisory personnel, and no data are available on their effectiveness.

4. MAG believes that concerns about the lack of uniformity in the application of Fitness Report evaluation criteria are justified and that improved means of describing employee performance should be considered. We have met with representatives of the Directorate MAGs who share our concerns in this area. We recognize that any substantial change in the approach taken would have far-reaching ramifications, and while we are not without ideas, we are reluctant to make proposals in the absence of fuller appreciation of their implications. We recommend that a task force be formed to review the efficacy of performance evaluation in the Agency. We believe such a task force should be headed by senior officers from each Directorate and include administrative and line personnel in middle and lower grade levels.

  
The Management Advisory Group

STATINTL

## ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Employee Concerns About Fitness Report Evaluations

FROM:

Director of Training  
1026 C of C

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

STATINTL

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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